

★ THE POLITICAL LINE OF SEIZE THE TIME ★

This is an article on party building. But it is not an article on how to build a party organization. Rather it is an article attempting to apply scientific socialist methods to the necessities of an American revolution. We will focus on developing political line, the over-all strategy to guide revolution based on a detailed analysis of social contradictions, movements and their relationships to each other. In the course of the article, it will become clear that we are in fact implementing an approach to party-building.

Many people can agree that party building is extremely important. We need the party's political line and organization to lead and develop the mass struggles of oppressed peoples into a force that can seize and reshape the political and social relations of society to conform with a socialized economic base, thus benefiting the vast majority of humanity. It is the party that integrates communists with the mass movements (fusion). It is the party that welds all aspects of mass organizing (prisons, childcare, TW communities, workplace, the military, etc.) into a total movement for revolution.

Yet, to date all recent efforts to build party organization have not been successful. We can not ignore this. Why have so many different organizations failed? It cannot be just that people have made mistakes in the process. In general revolutionaries here have not had a sense of how party building fits into the development of revolution. The reason why no party exists is twofold.

First, revolutionaries have had mostly incorrect ideas on how a party is formed. They have in general not applied dialectical materialism to this process. Like any other complex process, party building has several qualitatively different stages marked by changing contradictions and changing primary tasks (key link). * Understanding how party building proceeds from stage to stage is part of the subjective factor of consciousness.

Furthermore, U.S. revolutionaries have not done a thorough criticism of the errors of the CPUSA that led to its demise as the party of the working and oppressed masses. The major source of these errors is the effect of imperialism on the communist movement. The emergence of revisionism in the CPUSA was directly linked to the rise of U.S. imperialism in the world, and the liquidation of struggle against U.S. imperialism during WWII led to the liquidation of the Party's leadership of proletarian revolution. In essence, the liquidation of the struggle against imperialism led to the CPUSA's abandonment of a working class stand and M-L ideology. Likewise, the error of economism in the U.S. is directly linked to white supremacist ideology, which is based on the relative privilege of certain sectors of the working class. The super-profits of imperialism makes relative privilege possible.

The absence of a clear understanding of the party-building process has also allowed opportunism to flourish. This has been demonstrated by:

1. Liquidation of political line in an effort to win over the largest number of people possible, to build organization (October League).
2. Recruitment of working class people (or sending cadre into factory jobs), not on the basis of class stand, but rather just because they are workers (Revolutionary Union, Communist Labor Party).
3. Liquidation of political line and areas of practice to avoid repression (Oakland BPP).
4. Tailing the mass movement in propaganda, political line and even agitation and mass organization work (Communist Party USA, October League).

The struggle to expose and defeat opportunism in all its forms will be part of developing correct political line and building the party.

The criticism of the CPUSA and rectification of these errors must therefore serve as the *political* foundation of a new, correct CPUSA. We feel these are exciting and critical times because significant breakthroughs are in fact being made as demonstrated by:

- the formulation of oppressor/oppressed nations existing within the U.S. as a theory of imperialism
- the publication of *Prairie Fire* as the beginning of a major political line struggle among white communists.
- the current repudiation/rectification movement within a number of organizations in regards to economism/opportunism, the liquidation of national and women's questions and the analysis of imperialism.

The second factor in the failure of party building efforts is the objective factor of social conditions, including the experience of revolutionaries. Revolutionaries have not reached the point in the process where the actual organization of a correct party is possible. Certain tasks must be completed in order to begin party organization on a firm *political* basis. These tasks can be briefly summarized as grasping scientific socialism as our guiding ideology and developing political line. The two factors of objective and subjective conditions are interdependent because:

1. a certain level of development in social conditions and the practice of revolutionaries has been necessary to develop a conscious theory of party building, and
2. theory must in the future direct the development of revolutionary social practice in order to form the party.

THE DIALECTICS BETWEEN PARTY BUILDING AND MASS MOVEMENT

To go on, the leadership of every revolution guided by scientific socialism, starting from very early, summed up their movement in terms of stages, clearly delineating each stage by the history of struggle before it, the consciousness and activity of mass struggles, political and economic conditions, the state of organized revolutionaries and therefore, *the principal task of revolutionaries during each stage*. Criticisms have been made of "stage" theories because they have been applied very mechanically and undialectically. True, but the method itself is not incorrect. Also, those who misapply stage theory often ignore that every correct analysis was based on the principle that the masses are the makers of history. Lenin applied it to revolutionary movement by noting that whenever the revolutionary movement floundered, it wasn't because the masses were backward or faint-hearted; it was because revolutionaries failed to grasp the question then being posed by the mass movement.

* We use the term "period" in relationship to the "central task" of communists during that phase of a complex process. We see "stages" as their "key links" unfolding within a period and its central task. The term "key link" comes from Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism*; "to locate at any given moment the particular link in the chain of processes which if grasped, will enable us to keep hold of the whole chain and to prepare the conditions for achieving strategic success."

Beginning with the understanding of "from the masses, to the masses," American revolutionaries also must make the analysis of dividing the revolutionary movement into stages of development. This approach emphasizes the use of dialectics, something that has been badly needed. Each stage is separated from the previous one by a change in either the relative importance of major contradictions and/or the relative strength of social forces (their dominance/subordination or rising/declining direction). *Of course, there are no absolute cut-off dates — stages do interpenetrate.* Also, in any real society, contradictions and forces are very complex. Talking about the stages of revolutionary movement focuses on the major contradictions and generalizes actual conditions to allow us to gain an over-all view of them. In addition, revolutionaries "in the field" must be able to grasp the many particular contradictions of their own work and see them in the framework of society's major ones. The foundation of this dialectical analysis would be a thorough knowledge of American history, current events and a critical summary of revolutionary practice.

Despite the lack of such an over-all analysis and strategy, revolutionaries in the U.S. have been more or less able to respond to the demands of the spontaneous mass movement of the past (cultural identity and pride, self-determination and armed self-defense of communities, the women's, anti-war and students' movements, etc.). But, we have not been able to build a communist party (the BPP for example was really a mass organization). Some of the difficulties in the past were because many activists were not convinced of the need for a party and/or its *central* role in organizing revolutionary mass movement beyond its initial upsurge and retreat.

The problem more recently has been one of "putting organization in command." Many people joined "party formations" because they felt party organization was necessary to formulating even the beginnings of correct revolutionary analysis and strategy. Developing political line on national questions, women's movement, trade union work, fascism, political economy, etc. was to be put off until *after* an organization was formed. Brief principles of unity were generally the only political document accepted before joining these organizations. However, people then found that disagreements over political line caused the breakup of these organizations or that the antagonism and form of numerous splits made line struggle inconsistent and unclear at best, fatal at worst and certainly proved "the party" has not arrived.

Other arguments over party building centered around whether revolutionaries should link up nation-wide and then proceed to build local practice among the masses or that they should build strong local organizations based on immersion in mass work that then would link up into a nation-wide party.

The people advocating building a nation-wide party from the start were in fact correct about the party's form. However, they in general did not grasp the essence of the question — putting politics in command and seeing how "localism" downplayed the role of scientific socialist theory and methods and opened the way for economism and reformism. Localism focused on working with the "advanced" in a single workplace or community, placing an emphasis on location rather than consciousness. More often than not, this did not represent the advanced of the entire mass movement. Localism also focused on demands that could be won in a workplace, union local, etc. This meant demands were diluted to win over intermediate, even backward elements. These errors are the beginning of economism and reformism.

Localism has prevailed, partly by default. No nation-wide general political organization was formed. Therefore many activists have immersed themselves in local work when the primitive cadre organizations they belonged to split up over this and other questions of political line.

Most of the local "pre-party formations" either disbanded or quickly turned reformist/economist. Political disagreements could not be resolved in a scientific manner since the role of theory and the education of activists in Marxism-Leninism were downplayed. In a society ruled by the bourgeoisie, without revolutionary science to help us resolve contradictions, the "natural" outcome is some form of bourgeois thinking. Local programmatic approaches to party building became attempts to "build socialism" within alternative institutions (free clinics, food conspiracies, child care coops, serve-the-people programs), or within the trade union movement (intermediate workers' groups, which if one studies the early union movement, are not new, either in their form or the attempt to build socialism through them). Furthermore, heavy external repression/co-optation by the state intensified all these internal contradictions, often to the point of organizational breakup.

Some people in these organizations quickly realized the need for study, propaganda (as opposed to agitation) and the *crucial* need for the political clarity and strategic coordination a true party represents. In short, "localism" was a lesson that some revolutionaries learned from and others still have not.

How do we put politics in command of party-building? It's a complex process even in its simplest "textbook" form. In the heartland of U.S. imperialism it's even more difficult since that means revisionism and white supremacy (bourgeois ideology) are rampant both within the working classes and the revolutionary movement. So the *conscious* application of dialectical methods to the process of party building itself, and relating that to the unfolding dialectics of revolutionary mass movement in the U.S. are absolutely necessary.

Organization will soon become the most important task of party building, but only after a firm political basis for the organization is established. This is what the struggle for political line is about. Part of political line is *how* the party will be built.

Our view is that the struggle for a communist party can be divided into four stages:

1. Realization that revolution is a necessity, the creation of dedicated revolutionaries through their political experiences (it is right to rebel)
2. The struggle for correct ideology (scientific socialism — the ideology of the working masses)
3. The struggle for political line (the application of scientific socialism to this society in particular, the present stage)
4. The struggle for organization (actual formation of the party).

After the party is formed, it is faced with two major periods; first the struggle for leadership of the mass movement to overthrow U.S. imperialism and seize state power and second, the struggle to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist government.

Each stage of party building has a specific relationship to the mass movement. The consciousness of both the masses and revolutionaries develop from lower to higher levels in a dialectical relationship, similar to that between practice and theory. The masses do form the foundation of the struggle for the party, in that at each stage the mass movement poses questions that conscious revolutionaries must resolve and in so doing, build the party.

In the U.S., the '60's were a period of revolutionary upsurge. Rebellion against intolerable conditions was recognized by

oppressed as a right and a necessity. Many people became conscious revolutionaries. The mass movement took up struggles for self-determination, against imperialist wars, armed self-defense, national identity and cultural resistance, the liberation of women and control of unions. Revolutionaries rejected the CPUSA and its reformism. Yet in doing so, many also dismissed M-L ideology. Different forms of cultural and revolutionary nationalism/anti-imperialism/utopian socialism were adopted instead.

Some current analyses reject this period of the revolutionary/communist movement, characterizing it as "eclectic" (meaning its philosophy and theory were taken from many sources other than "genuine M-L-MT"). True, in rejecting the CPUSA, many did attribute too much to various petite bourgeois or bourgeois political writers, statesmen, economists, etc. (Nkrumah, Garvey, Fanon for example). However, many of these works are valuable if their class limitations are kept in mind (as Lenin used works by petite bourgeois economists of his day). Historical, literary and economic works relating to neo-colonialism, racism and American society are especially valuable. Furthermore, many people were also studying contributions to scientific socialism made *since* Lenin and other than Mao (notably from Ho, Giap, Cabral, Che, Kim Il Sung and George Jackson). These works both enrich M-L theory and prove its fundamental correctness. Certainly the greatest tribute we could give in memory of Marx, Lenin and now Mao tse Tung is to *add* to scientific socialism and insure it remains a *living science*.

But more important, labeling this period as eclectic is to see it in essence as negative. We disagree strongly and see this period as essentially positive. The main aspect of this time was that large numbers of activists dedicated themselves to the revolution of oppressed and working people. Given this, their own social experiences and eagerness to study would and did lead them to embrace M-L-MT.

In the flush of mass rebellion, most non-M-L revolutionaries saw revolution as a relatively simple and immediate process. Instead, the state recovered from its initial shock and began attacking the revolutionary movement with repression and ideological subversion. These attacks stressed the need for some form of continuous organization and especially for correct ideology. Since ideology is political philosophy — whose side you're on and your ultimate vision of society — the unity of revolutionaries quickly divided. One side adopted various forms of bourgeois ideology (cultural nationalism of US organization, the poverty program pimp). The other side based its ideology on working people and after struggle and study, re-discovered scientific socialism.

Meanwhile, the U.S. mass movement at its height consciously took its place as part of the world-wide struggle against imperialism. Chairman Mao wrote "In Support of the Afro-American People in Their Struggle Against Violent Repression" (1968), and graffiti in the streets drew the parallel between U.S. "police action" in Vietnam and police action in Watts. This was immensely important because U.S. revolutionaries in recognizing the solidarity of these struggles, began drawing lessons from them and seriously started studying scientific socialism. An example of this relationship was the popularization of the "Red Book," *Quotations of Chairman Mao* by the Black Panther Party.

But the 70's have marked the retreat of the mass movement due to the repression of the state, the betrayal of bourgeois/petite bourgeois elements and the immaturity of revolutionaries. The immaturity of revolutionaries has been demonstrated by mechanical and often opportunist application of supposedly M-L methods (for example, criticism/self-criticism, democratic centralism and organizational forms), the lack of study of scientific socialism and especially of U.S. history and current events, and the vagueness of political struggle leading to the alienation of mass support and of less developed cadre within organizations. The struggle for ideology within the revolutionary movement did continue despite these difficulties. Some important breakthroughs were made such as the ALSC Conference of 1974 and the BIA statement of 1975.

This period of retreat in the mass movement is not negative if revolutionaries respond correctly. A period of difficult struggle is exactly what is needed to cure the immaturity of revolutionaries. It teaches us patience and the necessity of *applying* the method of scientific socialism to *this* society. The masses are not merely waiting in the wings. They demand a winning strategy for revolution before they take the streets again. They recognize that ideology is not enough when all kinds of people call themselves Marxist-Leninist yet don't agree on basics such as the role of Black Liberation, women's liberation, etc. in the revolution for socialism. The struggle for political line in this period of the mass movement's retreat resolves this lack of a guiding strategy, lays the beginning political foundation of the party's organizational unity and provides the revolution with cadre matured in difficulty, truly dedicated to the people and thoroughly trained in scientific socialist methods.

It is impossible to anticipate the specifics of party organization and the stages of the next period (rebuilding the mass movement to seize power under the leadership of the party) without developed political line. However, two major developments are certain given the nature of class society and struggle. First, as the newborn party begins to assume leadership of the re-emerging mass movement, the state and its ruling class will respond with a ferocity matching and surpassing any repression of revolutionaries and the mass movement we have experienced yet. Forms of organization and activity that are now tolerated will be attacked as the threat of revolution grows. But, second, if revolutionaries are successful in meeting the demands of political line and party organization, the party and therefore the mass movement will survive despite this all-out attack, despite any losses and temporary setbacks. Just the survival of the party in the face of everything the ruling class can muster will become a great political victory in itself. It will prove to all concerned that the bourgeoisie of the U.S. is in essence a paper tiger, just as the survival of the Vietnamese liberation struggle under the leadership of the Vietnamese Workers' Party in the face of all the military might of U.S. imperialism proved that U.S. imperialism is a paper tiger and eventually led to its defeat and the victory of the Vietnamese people.



OUR DEVELOPING LINE

We have been putting forward that political line is the key link in party building. In the following pages, we will outline our political line. This line is in its formative stages, and we invite comrades to engage in sharp struggle around all of its aspects.

We believe that any political line must be based on analyzing concrete conditions and using scientific socialism to understand a situation and guide our work. Fundamental to this analysis is the understanding and application of the theory of contradiction. The theory of contradiction sharpens our understanding of the world, the contending forces within any process and the relationship between those forces. Central to understanding this theory is the critical role of the Principal and Fundamental contradictions within any process. These two contradictions are basic to the formulation of any political line.

PRINCIPAL CONTRADICTION WITHIN THE U.S.

In any process where two or more contradictions are present, there is always a contradiction which is primary. This contradiction is the sharpest and leading contradiction in that process. In any given period or stage there is one contradiction whose "existence and development determines or influences the existence and development of the other contradictions." At different stages this contradiction can change. Mao states that in a capitalist country the principal contradiction is between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In a semi-colonial country such as China of the thirties, the conditions were complex and what the principal contradiction was changed with the different stages (the period of the anti-Japanese United Front, the period of the Civil War, etc.). In the U.S., a capitalist country which is imperialist and has colonized peoples within its borders, the contradictions are very complex, and the principal contradiction shifts depending on the stage.

The staff of SST upholds that **THE PRINCIPAL CONTRADICTION WITHIN THE UNITED STATES IS THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THE BOURGEOISIE OF U.S. IMPERIALISM AND WORKERS FROM THE OPPRESSED NATIONALITIES.** * We reject as simplistic the formulation that the principal contradiction is between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. We also reject the formulation that the principal contradiction is between the oppressed nationalities and the bourgeoisie.

We believe that both these formulations were correct in other periods. During the sixties and early seventies, we believe that the oppressed nationalities formulation of principal contradiction was correct. Entire peoples rose up against U.S. imperialism. For example, the Black Liberation Movement had the active participation of students, professionals, the lumpen proletariat in addition to Black workers. Indeed, the movement was a national movement which cut across class lines. During that period the sharpest contradiction, the leading edge of class struggle, was encompassed in the contradiction between the oppressed nationalities and U.S. imperialism.

This is no longer true. We are no longer in a period of general offensive but one of general retreat. Most former allies of Black workers within the national movement have either become faint-hearted (such as many students, professionals and other elements of the Black petite bourgeoisie) or have decided to look after their own self-interest (this is true of the lumpen and elements of the high petite and low national bourgeoisie). TW workers (employed, un- and underemployed) are carrying the burden of the national struggle.

On the other hand, workers from the oppressed nationalities are also carrying the burden of the class struggle. Our practice and the history of the past several years shows that fusion between the revolutionary and workers' movements is most advanced with workers from the oppressed nationalities. The struggles led by the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, the farmworkers, Farah and Jung Sai workers and many others have been the leading edge of class struggles. In the mines, auto and steel factories, fields and on the docks, Third World workers have also taken the lead in international working class struggles. Class struggle within the national movement has also intensified, as shown by the lack of support for "poverty program pimps" by the great majority of TW people. Ideologically, scientific socialism has prevailed over cultural nationalism for the leadership of the national movements, another sign of intensified class struggle.

We believe that the principal contradiction as the most intense form of class struggle does not *presently* include white workers as a whole, because of the relationship of white workers to U.S. imperialism and the failure of the CPUSA after the thirties. (This is not to ignore the existence of advanced white activists and communists or their crucial role in winning revolution.) White workers are part of the oppressor nation of U.S. imperialism, based on the European colonization of America. Therefore, their nationalism (primarily manifest as white supremacy) supports U.S. imperialism and is always reactionary in contrast to TW peoples. U.S. imperialism has consciously set aside a small portion of its superprofits to blur the class division between itself and white workers. This material base in the form of relative privilege over oppressed nationalities, supports the ideology of white supremacy and has created a secondary contradiction between white workers and oppressed nationalities.

Similarly, imperialism has integrated the oppression of women into its system of exploitation, profit and relative privilege. Under these conditions, the ideology of male supremacy interacts with the ideology of white supremacy. So while the principal contradiction does not include white workers, white women workers are the weak link in the chain of relative privilege. If revolutionaries can turn this other secondary contradiction fostered by imperialism into a force against imperialism, we will have taken giant steps towards combatting the whole system of bourgeois ideology among white workers. Until then, male supremacy is another secondary contradiction that exists between working peoples.

We believe that *all* revolutionaries must work to resolve these secondary contradictions and intensify class struggle. We can't do it by sweeping contradictions under the rug as many have tried to do. During the 30's the *principal* contradiction was between the U.S. bourgeoisie and the proletariat. But the CPUSA failed in its leadership of the working class (partly by downplaying the role of national struggles) and the U.S. ruling class consolidated its position as the leading imperialist state of the world (1940's and 50's). The rebirth of a true communist party in the U.S. will once again sharpen the fundamental class contradiction. It can only do so by defeating white/male supremacist ideology, greatly increasing fusion with white workers and giving coordinated leadership to TW *peoples'* struggles.

The struggles of Native Americans against U.S. imperialism bears special comment. Historically the source of their oppression by the U.S. bourgeoisie has not primarily been labor exploitation, either wage or slave. It has been the bourgeoisie's attack on Native American land sovereignty and its consequences — genocide, imperialist war, broken treaties, reservations, etc. Therefore their struggles are primarily for national liberation based on the question of sovereignty over traditional native lands. This does not neatly fit into the formulation of principal contradiction equals *workers* from oppressed nationalities against U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie. However, that doesn't negate the fact that native struggles for sovereignty are one of the sharpest struggles against U.S. imperialism.

STT's analysis does not *create* the divisions that exist within the working class, but rather flows from an understanding of which struggles are the sharpest and are in fact leading the working class as a whole in its war against capital in its most reactionary form of imperialism. We believe our analysis flows from the heart of scientific socialism — the concrete analysis of concrete conditions.

PRINCIPAL CONTRADICTION IN THE WORLD TODAY

This is the era of imperialism. We believe the principal contradiction is between imperialism and oppressed nations. National liberation struggle against imperialism is the leading form of class struggle in the world. Certainly the U.S. is an imperialist power. We believe that the Soviet Union also is now an imperialism power on the basis of its economic domination, military intervention and political subversion of other peoples' national struggles and states.

We do not think it is correct to make one imperialist power the *main* enemy of oppressed people *throughout the world*, although one may be primary in a *particular* area. The dominance of U.S. imperialism in the late 40's and 50's was actually an unusual period in the era of imperialism. Usually two or more imperialist powers are contending and colluding throughout the world, fighting border wars here and making "treaties" between them and dividing up oppressed nations there. As Lenin said, "An essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between several Great Powers in the striving for hegemony."

We believe that the CPUSA's liquidation of the struggle against U.S. imperialism in favor of the struggle against Nazi imperialism during WWII is an excellent example of what happens when one imperialism is made primary over another by revolutionaries. Yes, U.S. imperialism is the main enemy of oppressed people within the U.S. now, but contention and collusion between imperialist powers throughout the world also includes *within* the U.S. This is clearest within the revolutionary movement. American revisionism neatly dovetails with Soviet social imperialism.

The implications of this formulation of principal contradiction in the world today have only been briefly outlined here. They must be drawn out and struggled over by all U.S. revolutionaries. STT will present articles devoted to this struggle in the future.

FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTION WITHIN THE U.S.

Chairman Mao instructs that "The fundamental contradiction in the process of development of a thing and the essence of the process determined by this fundamental contradiction will not disappear until the process is completed; but in a lengthy process the conditions usually differ at each stage. The reason is that, although the nature of the fundamental contradiction in the process of development of a thing and the essence of the process remain unchanged, the fundamental contradiction becomes more and more intensified as it passes from one stage to another in the lengthy process." The staff agrees that the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of ownership. In terms of class relationships this contradiction is expressed as the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The staff has unity that a fundamental contradiction of U.S. society is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of ownership. We realize that capitalist relations are at the root of U.S. imperialist society. The slave trade, genocidal campaigns against Native Americans, the conquest of the Southwest and the importation of Asian peasants were all done to strengthen and expand capitalism. We have not reached unity on whether or not there is more than one fundamental contradiction within the U.S. Some believe that in a situation as complex as the U.S. there may be more than one fundamental contradiction. The contradiction between oppressed nations and U.S. imperialism (for example Native Americans and Puerto Rico) and the contradiction between women and their oppression in class society (which predates capitalism) may also be fundamental contradictions. While none of these three contradictions will disappear until the process is completed (with the destruction of imperialism/capitalism and the working class seizure of state power), some of us feel that there can be only one fundamental contradiction in any process. We are studying this question further and engaging in polemics both internal and external to the staff.

THE CENTRAL TASK IS PARTY BUILDING: AROUND THIS TASK ALL OTHER TASKS UNFOLD

Our analysis states that there are basically two periods in a revolutionary struggle — one *before* the revolutionary party is formed and one *after*. In the first period the central task is building the party, the chief form of practice is propaganda and the twin guiding tactics are uniting revolutionaries and winning over the advanced to scientific socialism. In the second period the main tasks are consolidating the fusion between the revolutionary party and the mass movement, building the mass movement and preparing the masses and the party for the seizure of state power. We are in the first period now.

We disagree with those who end their analysis with just the definition of periods. Within each period there are many stages. In the first stage, a rupture was made with the dangerous sellout politics of the CPUSA, when the "little red book" was introduced by the BPP, when armed struggle, the right to self-determination and anti-imperialism all became mass questions. In this stage the struggle for scientific socialist ideology was the key link for the struggle to build a revolutionary party. In the present stage many different organizations and individuals from many movements have adopted scientific socialism as their ideology, but there is wide disagreement on most issues and questions confronting the cadres and masses. In this stage the struggle to formulate a generally correct guiding political line is the key link to building a party. When this line is formulated, the advanced are won over to it and communists are united around it, we will have entered the next stage when the key link is actually building the organization of the party. When the task of building the organization of the revolutionary party reaches its conclusion (this is the stage that the Bolshevik Party was in when Lenin wrote *What Is To Be Done*), we will have entered the next period which is marked by the active striving of the masses and the party for state

power. It is important to have a sound understanding of periods and stages because it is a very necessary part of formulating our tasks, priorities and tactics.

In this period the central task is to build a communist party. But this doesn't mean that our *only* task is party building. The Chinese view is that, "In any given place, there cannot be a number of central tasks at the same time. At any one time there can be only one central task supplemented by other tasks of a second or third order of importance." We agree. For example, in work with youth, our central task presently is developing and testing political line, uniting communists involved in this area of practice and winning over advanced youth activists through our propaganda. Though secondary, we still are also interested in combatting the drug epidemic and resisting police attacks against youth.

The struggle to develop a correct political line is the key task in building a party, but this does not mean to us that all cadre must be involved in organizing and participating in forums. Revolution is a science which demands a division of labor in areas such as military and cultural work. We believe that specialization based on political line struggle/unity and collective organization is generally correct. We also recognize the tendency for bureaucratic work methods and "small area" mentality to pop up. It must be firmly combatted by those involved.

More strategically, we believe that developing political line, testing it, refining it and steeling the cadres is not a quick process. At this time we believe that it is both correct and desirable that revolutionaries develop organizations which are based on both general unity around political line and the struggle to develop a correct line on party building, and on specific focus of their practice and propaganda on a particular mass movement.

In polemics we have had with other organization it has not been surprising that the most advanced political lines concerning various nationalities have come from organizations that have arisen out of those national movements. We believe that it is incorrect to form organizations whose main criteria is race, but we do believe it is correct to form organizations which come out of and to some extent focus much of their work within that movement. The process of fusing the revolutionary movement with the three great movements (workers', national and women's) is an ever deepening process. However we would point out that concretely this process is least advanced between white communists and white workers. White communists should join circles whose propaganda is directed towards developing political line among communists, especially on the role of white workers and women, and at winning advanced white workers and women to communism.

The central task is building a communist party, the key link is political line, and the chief form of practice is propaganda work. These points must be firmly upheld. Those who engage in specialized fields of work or organizations with a specific focus must all participate directly in the process of party building and enter into polemics around political line. This is every cadre's responsibility. In addition, there are secondary tasks that must be done and skills that must be learned. When the party is formed we don't want to have to go back and learn how to perform certain basic tasks. Chairman Mao said, "Learn to play the piano. In playing the piano all ten fingers are in motion; it won't do to move some fingers only and no others. But if all ten fingers press down at once, there is no melody. To produce good music, the ten fingers should move rhythmically and in coordination. A Party committee should keep a firm grasp on its central task and at the same time, around the central task, it should unfold the work in other fields."

POLITICAL LINE IS THE KEY LINK IN THIS PERIOD

When talking about the development of political line we must first clarify our definition of line. Political line is not just a "ten point program" or a "principles of unity." Ten point programs are important in that they represent a minimum program to unify the masses for struggle and the seizure of power. But a short program does not represent a unifying philosophy to guide the actions of cadres. Principles of unity are a step in the right direction, but represent only the individual threads of a political line. Routinely, different organizations' principles of unity contain positions on the women's question, national question, the international situation, etc. However, these threads do not outline the relationships between the different questions, relative priorities, what our line means for our work, how we move from one stage to the next, etc. Political line is the fabric which weaves together a summation of practice, history, method and theory to guide our work. The struggle to develop political line is an extremely serious one that takes much hard work. Inter-relating questions, such as the Black, Native American, and other national questions, the women's movement, fascism and the two superpowers, into one coherent process is difficult but necessary. To do so we must understand both the content of what we are trying to formulate and its process.

Opportunists of all shades seek to "simplify" and subvert this process by downplaying the importance of the struggle for correct political line. OL wants everyone to join their organizations over some vague "principles of unity." "After we unite, the guiding line will be formulated." We all have joined various organizations that put out some vague "principles" yet had no guiding line. In the line struggle that followed, discipline became atrocious, splits and factions multiplied and morale slipped. All of these are the results of unprincipled unity (unity that is not based on a struggled-out political line).

Other organizations confine political line struggle merely to "party building." These organizations downplay struggle over the national question, women's question, etc. "Everything must relate to Partybuilding!" Agreed, but we would not join a party that had an inadequate or wrong line on the Black nation, women's oppression, revisionism or fascism. That would be liberalism of the worst sort. It is critical to have a fully developed political line on the process, strategy and tactics of building the party. But we must also have developed political lines on the other critical questions of the day. The answer to many of these questions will determine the way the party is organized in the next stage of party building. Otherwise we would be building just another new refined version of the old organizations, and it would quickly split itself to death or fade slowly away due to its inability to win over advanced activists.

The analysis that political line is key in this stage must also lead us to the conclusion that temporarily theory is primary over practice. We understand that this is a reversal of the normal relationship of practice being primary over theory. We must remember that we have just come through a stage of intense practice. What many of us now see, and should have recognized earlier, is that our theory is weak, summation of our practice inadequate, and understanding of political line low. In a period such as this, theory (our summation of practice and history combined with the summed-up experience of the international revolutionary movement) must be primary, because without a qualitative leap in our theoretical understanding, our practice and mass movements cannot move forward.

What is the role of practice at this point? Some say that practice must be limited to propaganda work. Unquestionably, propaganda is the chief form of activity in this stage. Through propaganda we can facilitate struggle around political line, get the line out to advanced activists in the three great mass movements, and provide a vehicle to critically sum up our practice. *Presently no other form of work is more important.* However, other forms of practice still have their place. Practice is necessary to test our line and refine it in the fires of the three movements. Practice is necessary to steel our cadres for the tasks ahead. While actual contact is not needed with every advanced worker, we must be involved in the struggles they are involved in to spread our propaganda and line among the advance and win them over. Our primary emphasis is not on building mass campaigns at this time. To do so in the absence of a party is bound to lead to tailism or defeat. However we can't simply walk away from struggles. Defining the particular form this relationship takes in practical situations is not an easy task. Much discussion and struggle needs to take place. Even still, we firmly believe that just as all other tasks must unfold around our central task of party building, all other practice at this stage must unfold around the chief form of practice—propaganda. To eliminate practice from the relationship between theory and practice is to negate dialectics and become closet “revolutionaries.” To de-emphasize the leading role of theory and to belittle the role of propaganda is to bow to spontaneity and consign oneself to tailing behind the backward elements of the masses. Theory without practice is empty madness, and practice without theory is blind madness.

Who do we aim our propaganda at? At the advanced and scientific socialists. M-L cadres are the experienced core, who lend strength and the experience of practice to the party. These are the experienced fighters who have found their way through many difficult times and can be counted on to find their way through the difficult times ahead. The advanced are the best mass leaders of the three great mass movements, who study on their own, seek answers to the questions that the mass movements are putting forward and see the need for some form of party organization. They bring vitality to the cadre organization and put the party in contact with the masses.

We need both the experience of the cadres and the vitality of the advanced to develop political line. If we try to unify the cadres without a correct political line, the result will be sham unity that will disintegrate and yield disastrous results. Nor will we be able to win the advanced over without sharp struggle around political line. They have had their fill of opportunists who subvert struggle under the guise of “correct” ideology yet have a totally bankrupt line. Only by uniting the cadres that have been produced by the three great movements around political line and by winning over the advanced of those movements to the line, will we bring the revolutionary and mass movements ever closer (fusion).

REVISIONISM AND POLITICAL LINE STRUGGLE

The content of a political line determines the method of struggle we use; that is whether we treat it as an antagonistic or non-antagonistic contradiction. When struggling among comrades, contradictions are non-antagonistic. When struggling against revisionism, bourgeois lines that masquerade as “revolutionary,” the contradictions are antagonistic. What is the difference and how do we deal with the two different types of contradictions? Chairman Mao teaches us that the correct way to deal with contradictions among the people is through the process of unity/struggle/unity. We attempt to persuade and win over comrades to a correct line through discussion, study and testing of political line. Struggle among comrades must also be very sharp in order to reach a firm unity.

Our method of dealing with antagonistic political differences is completely different. Revisionist lines are essentially bourgeois lines. The danger of revisionist lines can be seen plainly in the effect of the thoroughly bankrupt “CP”USA's line. The CPUSA condemns violence by all oppressed people who defend themselves and/or fight for their liberation. They try to liquidate all struggle around the national question by claiming that “all god's children are happy, and we don't have to worry about them any more.” They support the UFW's reactionary policy on workers without papers. In San Jose, California they disrupted performances by a workers' propaganda theater group about a workers' struggle in South America by trying to eliminate all references to armed struggle, by starting fights and by applauding the revisionist Chilean CP which convinced Allende not to give the masses guns and thus left them open to the counter-revolutionary terror of the right-wing generals. It is these dogs who stated that the nationalism of Malcolm X was the same as the nationalism of the KKK. Last but not least, these same dogs back to the hilt their masters, the bandits of the Soviet Union whose crime record is worse than that of the homegrown fools (CPUSA).

The masters set up Lumumba, betrayed and ran out on the masses of Chile and Portugal, have armed the prime fool of Africa, Idi Amin, are setting up colonies throughout the world and generally trying to take the title of main troublemaker away from the U.S. Yet we welcomed Angela Davis into our ranks even though she is the lackey of these revisionists. In the future we cannot tolerate revisionists within our movement. Their reformist (and hence bourgeois) strategies eat at the heart of our fire and drive. Since their line is bourgeois, they cannot be counted as being among the people. The political contradictions with all revisionists are antagonistic, and those lines must always be eliminated.

OPPORTUNISM AND THE STRUGGLE AROUND POLITICAL LINE

Using a correct method is essential to developing a correct political line. There are two very popular methods of developing political line which are poisoning and subverting our struggle for correct line. One method is to develop political line without summing up practice, refusing to recognize, *repudiate and rectify* past errors. This method downplays the role of polemics (the conscious struggle over political line) and tends to seek unity with the lowest common denominator. This line sees two line struggle within an organization to be the exception rather than the rule.

This view of two line struggle is extremely incorrect and dangerous. Struggle around political line is the lifeblood of the development of correct line. By struggling over political line, we sharpen and unveil differences, and improve understanding of our own line. By struggling over political line, the opportunists who pretend to agree but subvert the work at every turn are exposed. By understanding the law of motion, we know that unity proceeds from a lower to a higher level. Line struggle allows us to struggle over differences and deepen our unity with comrades. Dialectics and history teaches us that only through struggle do we make any progress. This is no truer than in the struggle for political line.

Criticism/self-criticism is shined-on by opportunists who negate the struggle around line. Many organizations will change their line on an important question (such as the national question) without ever explaining if errors were made in the past, what were the roots of those errors and how did they recognize them. This method allows many organizations to switch their

line any time they feel they are losing support for their backward line. These organizations and their supporters call for everyone to unite with them without ever trying to find out if there are any fundamental political differences that would prevent unity. "Let's unite, we can develop line later." For example, October League will put forth different "principles of unity" for the same political prisoner defense committee in different areas of the country. In some areas, merely organizing to free that individual is their stated principle. They have even fought against the inclusion of any other principles. Faced with the militancy of national liberation consciousness in the South, the OL will say they support self-determination as a principle in doing defense work of Black political prisoners. But in reality they attack it at every turn.

For all these reasons we consider the conscious struggle around political line to be of the utmost importance. We must never forget that there are always two lines, two roads in opposition to each other, the bourgeois and the revolutionary. Struggle between these two lines is always present. Both internal and external to an organization, two line struggle is the rule and not the exception. Unity is only real when based on active struggle. We know that many comrades, especially those who have come out of the national movements, have a deep suspicion of polemics. This is due largely to the mechanical and often opportunist way they have been waged in the past. Forums in which a political line is laid out and followed by a lot of hurraing are not the most effective way to engage in line struggle. One problem with public forums is that the security against other leftists is tight, but any agent or provocateur can walk in and disrupt the proceedings. Usually during this process little line struggle takes place, and the advanced who came leave with more suspicion than ever of so-called communist organizations. We have found direct polemics among organizations with similar lines aimed at unveiling differences, small group discussions (especially with study circles), written polemics and invitation-only forums much more useful alternatives. Open and semi-open forums can expose the advanced to some of the key line struggles and expose bankrupt lines. But any organization which *relies* on forums to identify and win over the advanced is making a serious mistake.

The second incorrect method of line struggle is not understanding dialectics. It too leads to serious errors when engaging in political line struggle. One such mistake is made by those who seem to see only "shades of differences" between themselves and forces they view as comradely. With forces they do not consider comradely, they see and struggle around "contradictions." In both cases these political differences are contradictions and represent two line struggle. Dialectics demand that line struggle and contradictions always exist in political struggle. Calling it by a different name does not move our understanding forward, and may in fact contribute to subduing line struggle between non-antagonistic forces.

At one time our staff also had the habit of consigning all forces we disagreed with to any significant degree into the revisionist camp. We have repudiated this incorrect line and recognize that it is not dialectical, negates the struggle for political line, and is in fact hegemonic (the view that you are the only legitimate M-L organization and therefore have no need to struggle within the rest of the communist movement). We found that we had taken the easy road out and had lost opportunities to struggle around line with many forces that had similar but not identical lines. After much polemics, we have observed that we have *much* to learn from other organizations, and in return we have much to offer.

The struggle around political line has not yet reached a point where anyone can say with authority that "this is *the* correct line, all else is sham." This error is as dangerous as the error of August Twenty-ninth Movement (ATM) comrades when they *declare* that two line struggle within an organization is the exception and not the rule. The struggle for political line is key and critical during this stage. We must be ever vigilant against errors both in the method and the content of this struggle.

POLITICAL LINE DOES NOT END WITH PARTY BUILDING: SKETCH OF OUR DEVELOPING LINE IN OTHER AREAS

We stated in the previous section of this paper that we do not believe that our responsibility to develop political line ends with our position on party building. There are many other critical questions on subjects such as fascism, the state, the international situation and the two superpowers, armed struggle, the trade union movement, the three great movements and many others. These issues are complex, but we cannot see how any responsible communist can ignore them. We would have a hard time joining a party that did not have a line on fascism within the U.S. On the other hand, we must make priorities among these questions. STT has spent so much time on party building because we feel it is a critical question *now*. However we believe that there is another burning issue within the movement around which clear lines of demarcation must be drawn. This is the question of imperialism. As Lenin outlined at the beginning of this century, we live in the era of imperialism and understanding its internal and external consequences is fundamental to the correct development of political line.

IMPERIALISM, THE WORLD AND THE U.S. MOVEMENT

We are just beginning to study the international situation in depth. Our preliminary analysis tells us that there are *two* major imperialist powers—the U.S. and the Soviet Union. They contend for power and control of the world just as Lenin describes in his classic work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Both imperialisms are equally corrupt, and neither has any redeeming value. We are familiar with the corruptness and villiany of U.S. imperialism. Our lives as Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, women and workers are marked by the crimes of imperialism. Yet it is past time to realize that since the Vietnamese victory, the Soviet Union matches the U.S. crime for crime. Some of the Soviet Union's crimes were described in the previous section on revisionism. What must be studied and understood is that capitalism has been restored in the USSR and that it has imperialist relations with a number of countries. Its policy of "international division of labor" is a cover for the imperialist policy of requiring different countries to produce only certain products in order to support the Soviet economy. Cuba produces the sugar, another country the railway cars and at one point Egypt produced the cotton. For instance, "Czechoslovakia used to provide the Soviet Union with most and even all its annual export of trunk-line electric locomotives and trolley buses. Today, as demanded by Semyonov (the Russian ambassador to Czechoslovakia), the enterprises producing these two items will have to switch to other 'new items' to meet the Soviet Union's changed needs" (Peking Review). At one point Semyonov publicly stated that "[the Czechs] make a better study of the Soviet market needs, and the prospect of the development of the Soviet economy." He also showed dissatisfaction with the "varieties of goods produced and supplied (to the Soviet Union) by Czechoslovakia." One need only remember the '68 invasion to realize that the Russians are as fully prepared to back up their "desires" as the U.S. India's dependence on the USSR has reached

monumental proportions. The Soviet press boasts that they control 80% of the machine building industry, 60% of the electric equipment, 35% of the oil processing and 38% of steel. Indian journalists commented on Soviet "aid" by saying that, "She maintains a monopoly of the work of design and supply of machinery and spare parts for the enterprises set up with her help," and "Indians had very little to do with the planning of the projects."

Inside the Soviet Union capitalism has been restored. Unemployment and therefore crime are rising, despite lip service to the socialist goal of productive labor at decent wages for all. The government has increased penalties for firearms possession and has been trying to buy sophisticated police and criminology equipment from the U.S. Racism, sexism, national chauvinism and oppression are again common and encouraged by the ruling class (the new techno/bureaucratic capitalists). Profits are the key to success, and material incentives are the rule. Soviet economists are pushing for increasing "semi-private" enterprises (dentists, repair shops, photographers, etc.) because it will "encourage economic growth." The farm cooperative system has become so corrupt that private land plots, 5% of the land, produce about 20% of the annual output. There has been a full restoration of bourgeois luxury and decadence. A golf course is being built by a U.S. firm for the enjoyment of the new Tsars. Watergate style corruption has taken hold. Using state money to build villas and gaining bonuses by falsifying output are common. Malcolm X in the early sixties warned us against the Soviet Union because it had become infected by "dollarism." He said that Russia's dollarism was the reason why Mao and Khrushchev couldn't get along. The restoration of capitalism within the Soviet Union should be carefully studied by all comrades.

Like all young imperialist powers, the Soviet Union is trying to throw its weight around in order to gain new colonies. This contention for world hegemony is becoming fiercer and makes the Soviet Union the main danger for starting a new world war. However the most dangerous aspect of the Soviet Union isn't that of starting a new world war. The Vietnamese have proved that belligerent super-powers can be defeated by a united people led by a fighting communist party. The most dangerous aspect of the Soviet Union to national liberation struggle is not its military might but its bourgeois ideology veiled in socialist words and its past history of revolution. The philosophy of detente and "peaceful transition to socialism" has done more to sabotage revolution in Chile, Portugal, Zimbabwe and the Middle East than all the guns, money and puppet troops of the U.S. This philosophy masquerading under the disguise of socialism disarms the people by deluding them into believing that there is a road to freedom that does not involve violent struggle against those who have oppressed the people for centuries. The ruling classes of the world have and will never give up power peacefully. Power and the state apparatus must be seized from them. This truth was formulated by Lenin and confirmed by revolutionary struggles in Mozambique, Vietnam and China. In addition, just as a former slave can become the best overseer, the formerly socialist Soviet Union is more adept at manipulating the internal contradictions of revolutionary movements than the U.S.

We must learn from the revolutionary African movements and countries in analyzing the international situation. President Nyerere of Tanzania stated in a recent interview, "There are two superpowers contending for world domination — the Soviet Union and the U.S. China is a Third World country just like Tanzania." In formulating positions on the international situation we must uphold our responsibility as scientific socialists to take a revolutionary, non-revisionist, independent stand. Comrades from ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) state, "No people in the world have a monopoly on truth." In the world we can sum up our position by saying, "the future is bright, the road torturous. Revolution is still the main trend in the world today!"

THE DOMESTIC CONSEQUENCES OF IMPERIALISM: DEVELOPING POLITICAL LINE FOR THE THREE MOVEMENTS

A sound political line must have an analysis of important domestic questions. The question of imperialism is vital in understanding the contradictions within the U.S. Too many left forces treat the question of imperialism as if it is only an international phenomenon, without internal consequences. This error leads to incorrect views that typically liquidate the national and women's questions, and turn the fight for self-determination into merely a battle against racism. Forces that do not recognize/understand the internal consequences of imperialism view the U.S. as a "pure" capitalist country in which the principal contradiction can be simply reduced to be between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. They forget that two of the classic imperialist states of this century — turn of the century Russia and the present U.S.A. — both have been accurately described as "the prisonhouse of nations." Present are not only the classic capitalist contradictions but also the internal contradictions of imperialism. UNTIL WE GENERATE A CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF IMPERIALISM, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO WIN OVER THE ADVANCED, ADVANCE FUSION, OR BUILD A COMMUNIST PARTY THAT REPRESENTS THE BEST ELEMENTS FROM THE THREE MOVEMENTS.

Our analysis is based on the recognition that U.S. imperialism has provided the necessary conditions for the formation of oppressed nations. Native Americans and Blacks, Puerto Rico and Hawaii are oppressed nations, and we are leaning towards the view that Chicanos are also. The oppressed nations and internal colonies are sources of cheap labor and represent huge reserves of labor for periods of economic boom. Over-priced, inferior products are dumped on their captive markets. Finance capital has ready outlets for surplus capital investment, which further exploits the oppressed nations and internal colonies. Last but not least, the class contradictions of the oppressor nation are readily exported alongside goods and capital.

In a period of imperialist crisis such as now, the internal colonies and nations play a more important role. The U.S. imperialist system has been based on the super-exploitation of oppressed nations and colonies internal and external to the U.S. This super-exploitation of oppressed nations and peoples provides the material base for relative privilege and white supremacist ideology among workers from the oppressor nation. As the national liberation struggles of Africa and Asia become more successful, and Third World countries fight for economic independence, super-profits extracted from abroad are greatly reduced. In addition, the economic and political crisis is greatly heightened by the immense cost of losing counter-revolutionary wars. Instead of cutting profits, the ruling class increases its exploitation of working and poor people within the U.S. Real income has been rapidly declining for all working and poor people. It has dropped to 1% below 1968 income.

However, the gap between the income of white and Third World working and poor people have been widening at an even faster rate. The median income of Black families was \$7,800 in 1975, only 58% of the white family median income of \$13,350. The ratio was 61% in 1966. The unemployment gap is also widening. The social services cutbacks affect Third World families and individuals the most. For example, manpower training funds have flowed out of the inner cities into suburban areas.

In the past, the bourgeois ideology of white supremacy has prevented workers of the oppressor nation from supporting the right of internal and external nations to self-determination and national liberation. In fact, significant sectors of the white working class have at times actively combated national liberation struggles at home and abroad.

It is important for communists to determine what the rising trend is among workers of the oppressor nation. Most comrades agree that the two line struggle between the bourgeois road (fascism) and the revolutionary road (proletarian revolution) is at unprecedented heights among white workers. This two line struggle is being intensified by the imperialist crisis. Many comrades feel that revolution is the rising trend among white workers. Our practice everywhere, and the role of white workers in Boston, Louisville and other places shows that both fascism and revolution are rising trends, but the trend for fascism seems presently stronger. The use of super-profits gained from super-exploitation to buy off significant sectors of the working class of the oppressor nation has been recognized by all honest revolutionaries since Marx. This tactic has reached its highest form within the U.S.

White women workers (un-and underemployed included) are clearly the weakest link in the chain of relative privilege within the oppressor nation. Their exploitation approaches that of the oppressed nationalities. Economically they play a similar role of cheap labor and an immense labor reserve, besides performing "women's work", the reproduction and production of the family. While not suffering the triple jeopardy of Third World women, their oppression and exploitation is also strengthened by the ideological reinforcement of male supremacy. Within the oppressor nation, women workers are often the leading edge of the revolutionary movement and the firmest allies of oppressed nationalities. The allied strength of white women's and Third World women's struggles makes the women's movement one of the three great movements that will combine to topple imperialism.

Understanding the internal consequences of imperialism is key to understanding contradictions within the U.S. Fusion is the integration of revolutionary ideology and leadership with the mass movements. Before state power can be seized, fusion must take place, and the revolutionary party must have been built. Part of the process of party building involves fusion. As more and more advanced are recruited into the ranks of the party, the leaders of the mass movement become party builders. Most communists talk about fusion just taking place between the communist and workers' movements. In our view, this is an incomplete formulation that ignores the internal aspects of imperialism. There are three pillars of imperialism — the fundamental exploitation of the working class, the super-exploitation of oppressed nationalities and the oppression of women. The masses have created three great struggles; the international workers' and women's movements and the energetic movements of the oppressed nationalities. For the revolutionary movement to successfully build a communist party, fusion must take place with *all three* movements.

We are studying and struggling over three other important issues related to the crisis of imperialism. One is fascism. One of the questions we are asking is to what extent do Dimitrioff's and George Jackson's analyses contradict or agree? Since we generally stand on Jackson's analysis (see Vol I, No. 2), to what extent do the contradictions within the bourgeoisie affect that analysis? What are the rising tendencies within the bourgeoisie?

The second issue is that of the trade union movement. We have comrades active in this movement. Their practice has been very mixed, with both some extremely good and bad work. The need to expose and attack the trade union bureaucrats is clear. One unresolved question is, what role do the national contradictions and white/male supremacy within the worker's movement play in our work? Another is, what does "building the united front from below" mean for work within a union? This is a line which we uphold in the other two movements. It essentially says that instead of concentrating in this period on building massive coalitions, with the petite bourgeoisie, the reformers, revisionists and opportunists, we should concentrate on building grass root based movements and then, from a position of strength, enter into coalitions with other elements on a case-by-case basis. Further, what does the question of fascism mean to the trade union movement?

The third issue is if we should build mass movements against war by the super-powers and fascism. This is the line of ATM, MLOC (Marxist-Leninist Organizing Committee) and WVO (Worker's Viewpoint). We believe that building the communist party is primary now, but even when one has been built, we should be building a movement to fight *for revolution* instead of against war and fascism. We agree with the Chinese view, "Revolution will prevent war, or war will give rise to revolution." We choose to prepare and organize for revolution as the surest guard against war and fascism.

REVOLUTIONARY PRACTICE, PROPAGANDA AND SEIZE THE TIME

We have already stated that propaganda is the chief form of practice in this period. This is true regardless of any specialization of work. Cultural workers, childcare and youth workers, factory and community organizers, and others must all make propaganda an integral part of their work. Since propaganda tries to win people over to a way of thinking, it must necessarily be more in depth than agitation (which persuades people to a course of action). The analytical nature of propaganda makes print generally the most suitable mass media. Yet, good propaganda need not be restricted to print forms. Film, theater, tapes, etc. can all play important roles.

Propaganda is a vital tool in spreading line and furthering struggle. As such, it should be clearly aimed at the advanced or scientific socialists. Practice is the sole criteria of truth regarding the political line that we develop in this stage. Circles and organizations should concentrate their practice on developing propaganda. As political line is struggled over and unity reached, this unity should be tested by developing joint propaganda. Our view is that *joint propaganda work should be the first and chief form of joint work in this stage.*

As more and more are won over and united around a correct political line, organizational forms will grow from a lower to a higher level. This development of organization is a good thing and should be encouraged. However, we would remind comrades that serious errors were made when comrades rushed to join "party centers" such as CL, RU and now OL. All of these centers have thoroughly bankrupt lines incapable of doing anything but harm to the masses and the movement. In doing joint propaganda work and increasing the level of organization, we must firmly grasp that line is key.

STT is a propaganda tool that identifies itself with the growing trend of communist forces that are in the process of forging a correct line on party building and imperialism. We unite with those who see political line as being the key link to the central task of building a party (correct method) and recognize the leading role of workers of the oppressed nationalities in the three great movements against imperialism.

We recognize that in repudiating our main past error (not seeing political line as being key link), we have to outline a program for rectification. One aspect of our rectification campaign is to deepen struggle over political line in the national movements. Our own mass work within these movements has had right tendencies. While doing excellent agitational work, we liquidated the development of political line. Localism was one form this error took. Concentrating on building "progressive" nationalist mass organizations and emphasizing ideology as key were others. By bowing to spontaneity we did not maintain contacts with advanced and scientific socialists in several national movements. We are in the midst of trying to clean up some of our mistakes in this area. One key tactic will be developing joint propaganda efforts with other comrades within the national movements.

For the paper, complete rectification means developing STT into a journal that puts out a line, facilitates struggle over line and sums up practice that tests line. While we are not a cadre organization, the staff deeply feels the responsibility to carry out the task of line struggle.

Several form changes in STT reflect the rectification campaign. The journal format and typesetting will hopefully make it easier to read and get into. The articles will *all* be selected with an eye toward the development of line—especially in the areas of party-building and imperialism. Graphics will be more aimed at some question of line rather than being just agitational or a space-filler. We hope to participate in joint propaganda efforts outside the scope of this journal. While many of these changes seem to be merely changes in form, we think they reflect changes in essence and repudiation of an incorrect line.

Politically one of the main ways we will rectify our work is to seriously wield the weapon of criticism and self-criticism at all levels of the staff. When we revived use of this powerful weapon, opportunists were exposed in our leadership and wrong ideas and methods exposed and swept away.

At the same time, we will be much more conscientious in having thorough discussions in the staff regarding the major articles and the political line they put forth. These three articles on political line are the results of a major collective effort spanning months of work. Polemics (political line debate) with other organizations will become a set task of the staff as a whole. Petite-bourgeois elitism, a hegemonic view of the movement and upholding organization as key link led us to de-emphasize polemics and cut us off from many potential friends within both the communist and mass movements. Some former "comrades" even consciously sabotaged polemics that were being set up. By bowing to spontaneity, we came close to liquidating our role in developing communist theory, political line and program applicable to the particularities of struggle in the U.S. Rectification means in part *politically* determining the content of each issue so that we can advance the struggle for political line and eventually aid the development of the party program. We are beginning to understand that the distribution and financing of our journal are *political* tasks to be taken as seriously as any other. These are a few of the political rectifications that we will begin to undertake.

CONCLUSION

Comrades! We have just begun the process of criticism/self-criticism, repudiation and rectification. We call on all comrades to criticize our line to help us overcome our errors and move on. We have just begun to outline our developing political line. Much more will be coming in future issues of STT. Until then, "the sooner begun, the sooner done!"

DEVELOP AND STRUGGLE FOR CORRECT POLITICAL LINE

STUDY IMPERIALISM

A LUTA CONTINUA

POLITICAL SUMMATION OF PRACTICE THAT LED TO STT'S POSITION ON PARTY BUILDING

The central staff of STT is making an analysis of our strengths and weaknesses in an effort to solve problems which have been interfering with our work.

A source of STT's strengths is the political basis of unity on which the paper began its work. In 1974 STT began with the recognition that:

- the mass movements were in a period of retreat;
- revolutionaries lacked sufficient theory and organization to lead the mass movements out of that retreat into revolutionary war for state power;
- revisionism, opportunism and economism were rampant in the revolutionary movement, particularly in regards to questions of national liberation and armed struggle within the U.S.;
- there was therefore a need for an *Iskra* type journal aimed at revolutionaries and advanced activists in order to combat revisionism, etc. and develop theory for a revolution in America and STT was to be a nation-wide propaganda organ.

From this basis STT was able to make significant contributions in the formulation of oppressor/oppressed nations within and outside the U.S. and its implications for political questions such as fascism, the oppression of women and party building. Organizationally STT provided a means of consistent common work and struggle between Third World and white M-L's linked to each staff's work within oppressed and oppressor nations. Ideologically STT advanced the acceptance and study of scientific socialism, particularly among Third World revolutionary nationalists.

However as we began to organize people around producing, distributing and using STT, we lost sight of some of the political tasks we had set in the beginning. While developing organization, we did not continue developing the political basis of unity. Related to that, we started including more agitation and more articles on the **mechanics** of mass organizing. Yet our audience was supposed to be experienced M-L's and advanced activists, people who have been organizing others for years. What we really needed was articles developing the **strategy** of revolutionary movement. It was as if we had gotten in a car with a friend who was driving and, instead of figuring out how to get to our destination, we were telling our friend how to drive.

Tension developed between our undeveloped basis of political unity and all the organizational work we were doing. The staffs' primary area of unity was the analysis of imperialism that STT was advancing. But we were not deepening our political clarity/struggle/unity on many other important questions such as Soviet social imperialism, party-building and women's oppression. Nor did we relate these questions to our analysis of imperialism. We approached developing an analysis of the women's question from a very mechanical perspective. We said to ourselves, "Well, we've had an issue for these people and that movement. So now we need one for women." As problems began to crop up in the content of the women's issue and the method used to develop that content, the weakness of the staff's political unity was exposed.

It also exposed the lack of political struggle within the central staff. This was reflected in the failure of the central staff to struggle collectively over the political content of articles and the future direction of STT as a journal and as organized groups of TW and white revolutionaries relating to each other and their respective movements. Instead we showed a continued tendency to approach the work mechanistically.

cally, putting details and form before political line and content. What this meant in our practice was an inability to grasp the basis for principled work among TW and white M-L and how it is coordinated. When politics are shoved aside, and structures and details become primary, an acute case of liberalism is the byproduct. It also allows opportunist elements to wreck havoc.

The central staff began a rectification program shortly after the last issue was published. Political discussions and struggle led us to the recognition that a firmer basis of political unity was imperative for the principled functioning of STT. We began our discussions by studying and trying to develop a political analysis of the world situation, conditions of the U.S. and a position on the tasks of revolutionaries. We had hoped this could serve as principles of unity. We intended to use these principles for editorial policies and membership on the staffs. During the discussions we understood the inappropriateness of the Principles of Unity approach. Instead, we began forming the tenets of a political statement for STT.

Through these discussions political differences surfaced in the central staff in the following areas:

1. Political line is the key link in the development of a M-L party. It will remain the key link until there is a party program. The other position maintained that the development of organizational structures of cadre organization is the primary aspect of party building at this time.

2. Concerning our tasks — one line held that we sharpen political analysis and use it as a yardstick to evaluate who the advanced, middle and backward forces within the left are. On the basis of this initial analysis we would participate in political discussions with advanced forces to sharpen unity and unveil differences. Using the political unity as a foundation we would strive toward common practice in propaganda work. The opposing opinion argued that the correct approach to the development of political line is the formation of small workteams on each front of practice, each of which would be overseen and connected to a primary organization. In other words, "The synthesis of organization and ideology is political line."

3. On mass work and its relation to party building — One side stated the relationship between mass work and party building in three points: a) in this period mass work is not done in the main to recruit or win strategic battles but rather done primarily to test our line and develop strategies and methods to win advanced activists to scientific socialism, b) to use this practice as a foundation in struggling with other revolutionaries around questions of line, strategy and implementation, and c) steeling ourselves to become class conscious leaders.

The opposite position saw mass and intermediate work as steppingstones to building the party. As a result, emphasis was placed on strong local organizations, and proposed that communists and activists link up through advanced mass organizational form to be built directly.

At this time STT would like to refer its readers to our position on party building in the article, **The Developing Political Line of STT**, on page 20, which also contains a self-criticism by the Third World staff. STT needs to do a much more thorough self-criticism. Due to reasons of space, timing & continuing struggle and development, this will be presented in the next issue.

★ PALESTINIANS AND NATIVE PEOPLE

physical existence. We have seen in our own past and in the contemporary practice of imperialism that the system is capable of generating atrocities which forever remain blots on civilization and humanity.

It is true that objective conditions for revolution do not exist in this part of the system at this time. But with the advent of a general crisis in imperialism the objective conditions can be said to exist everywhere. Even at this point, when large liberated base areas exist and many other areas are being contested, it is necessary that a certain level of subjective development occur in the privileged sector. Indeed the question of leadership has already been forced upon us by the bourgeoisie.

Already we can see indications of a reactionary, anti-liberation mobilization in the imperialist nations, including Canada. The spearhead of this mobilization is the world Zionist movement backed by big business. In Vancouver big business press (*The Sun* and *The Province*) has been calling upon the forces of reaction to oppose the forthcoming U.N. Habitat Conference because of the participation of the PLO. The city government here (and also, earlier on, the federal government) has taken a stand against the PLO as a "terrorist organization." Mercenaries and volunteers are being recruited from all over Europe and North America to fight against the national liberation movements in the Third World. A vast counter-insurgency network is being built up in North America composed of CIA, FBI, RCMP and elements of the military. All these developments form part of a counter-revolution being organized by the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Therefore the strategic internationalist tasks of the internal colonies are to oppose class collaboration with proletarian internationalism, actively oppose "domestic" reaction in its racist, Zionist and fascist forms and, struggle against chauvinism and opportunism in the privileged left. In keeping with this we say

LONG LIVE THE SPIRIT OF NORMAN BETHUNE!

DEATH TO ZIONISM!

LONG LIVE THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION!

★ COMMENT BY SEIZE THE TIME

This is a statement from a Native American study group that is applying scientific socialism to the particularities of the Native national struggles in North America. The analysis they have developed concerning internal colonies,

white supremacy and the modern aristocracy of labor, the meaning of internationalism for revolutionaries from the internal colonies and oppressor nation, and the effects of Zionism throughout the world and in North America is remarkably similar to our own.

We have a difference with the article. We believe that Soviet Social imperialism must be exposed whenever imperialism is being discussed in the international context. Given the subversive effects of "detente" on national liberation struggles, the role of social imperialism cannot be passed over.

We urge comrades to study this document carefully. We believe that understanding imperialism is one of the two great theoretical tasks (the other is understanding party building) facing the communist and mass movements. Only by understanding the consequences of imperialism within the U.S. will greater fusion be achieved between these movements. These comrades are making important contributions to the development of political line in North America. They prove again the importance of the national liberation movements in developing revolutionary theory for North America.

★ STT SELF-CRITICISM OF WOMEN'S ISSUE

perspective. Historically, homosexuality for TW people has often been a phenomenon introduced and/or encouraged by imperialism to weaken the social and cultural institutions of TW people, and to create antagonisms among TW people. For example, much homosexuality in the Black colony and in Indochina is and was part of the prostitution and drug trade. Other conditions under which homosexuality is more common for TW people are prisons and segregated workplaces (e.g. male Chinese and Filipino workers were contracted to work here long years without their families, or women, because white employers didn't want to introduce a "yellow horde" to America — enforced birth control).

While homosexuality has not been used in this way among white people, a beginning discussion of the aspects of this question point out the need for discussion and leadership from Third World revolutionaries.

In conclusion, while much was learned and accomplished in STT's women's issue, much work and analysis still remains to be done. With this in mind, STT would like to refer our readers to "Imperialism & White Women's Oppression" on page 15.